

Cranwell, Brauncewell & Byards Leap Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Cranwell Village Hall at 7 p.m. on Monday April 11th 2022.

Attendance: With Cllr Trevor Batten in the Chair

Cllrs Mike Pears, Michael Cassidy, Carole Batten, Maureen Cassidy,
Mark Collier

The Parish Clerk was unable to attend due to illness so Cllr Pears took the minutes of the meeting.

40 members of the public were in attendance.

At 7 p.m. Cllr Batten welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the origin of the Annual Parish Meeting back to Medieval times and its purpose – to give the residents of the parish the opportunity to voice their thoughts, ideas and opinions about village matters. He stressed that this was not a meeting of the Parish Council – they merely arranged it for the benefit of the public.

1. Notes of the previous meeting held on 14th June 2021 to be approved as minutes.

A member of the public (Steven Hallam) proposed and another seconded that the minutes be approved and they were unanimously approved as a true record of that meeting.

2. Chairmans Report for 2021/22 by Cllr Trevor Batten.

The Chairman first expressed his delight in seeing so many people present and then went on to introduce the members of the Parish Council.

He then went on to dispel any myths about Parish Councillors being paid. Parish Councillors do not get any privileges or special consideration when it comes to Planning Applications. Whilst NKDC will ask the Parish Council for comments on a Planning Application for them to consider, the decision is theirs and being a Parish Councillor has no influence or benefit at all. Every single Councillor is an unpaid volunteer, who gives up their spare time and works for the good and benefit of the Parish and the people in it.

He then thanked the Ex-Parish Clerk Mr Eddie Findley. Eddie had been the glue that has held the Parish Council together over the very difficult period of Covid. Eddie's tenacity, professionalism, knowledge of all things Council, calmness and reasoned approach has been invaluable. Unfortunately, Eddie has decided to leave the position of Clerk after 10 years' service (you get medals for less) Eddie left due to the commitments of his full-time service in the RAF.

Which brings me onto our new Clerk Mrs Kirsty Elson, Kirsty started with us in August 2021 and has been a star since becoming a crucial part of the team.

We also lost a long standing and very valuable Member of the Parish Council who had been Chair for many years, this being Helen Morris. Helen gave so much of her time and energy to and for the benefit of the Village and is still a mine of information when asked.

There are currently 3 Vacancies on the Parish Council and if you would like to be considered please contact the Clerk.

So, what have these Unpaid Volunteers been doing for you over the last year ?

We have held 14 Parish Council meetings this year - dealing with everything from commenting on planning applications to installing gates. Which brings me onto footpaths. The closure of Permissive walkways by Dyson caused quite a stir in the village and a lot of people were very unhappy about the complete lack of consultation involved. This led to the creation of the Cranwell Footpaths Working Group. This group is dedicated to restoring what the Village sees as its historical access. This being footpath 3 that used to go from Green Lane to North Road and footpath 4 that goes from North Road to meet up with the footpath that goes to Brauncewell . These footpaths are important, although Dyson are great with the permissive footpaths, they are at their discretion and are not legal obligations. If another land owner ever took over them these could disappear. We need to safeguard these routes for the future. By 2026, if they are not registered, they will be lost

Thanks go to Dyson Farming for their excellent upkeep of the permissive walkways.

Registration of DMMO 376 was denied by the Council (LCC) due to no evidence being received although it had been sent – over 30 forms went missing. So, a new DMMO application was submitted with over 60 supporting documents with copies, both paper and digital. This has now been very successful and has been given high priority by LCC for a decision. Thanks go to Jackie Mills and the team for a lot of hard work achieving this very substantial result. Thanks also go to Sue Marshall and Cllr Carole Batten for their work on this.

We do have an established foot path that goes from the middle of the sports field to North Road. This is the eastern end of what was footpath 3. This was very overgrown and impassable. We have liaised with the County Council and they have cleared the footpath. They recommended a gate be installed from the sports pitch and this has now been done by myself with help from Cllr Carole Batten.

We as a Council made an error during this. We did not consult Mr Black of Oxenton Farm about the gate. I have already personally apologised to Mr Black for this lack of courtesy but feel that this should be also done publicly. So again Mr Black, our apologies.

All that said, when or if Digital Mapping order 375 (the case to open the pathway from Green Lane to meet up with what has been cleared) comes to fruition, Mr Black

of Oxenton Farm has offered to build new stiles to replace the old rotten ones. So thank you Mr Black for being so public spirited.

Speeding in the Village.

We now have 2 SIDs in the Village with 4 poles so they can be alternated but unfortunately both SIDs have developed faults due to a faulty chip. These are to be changed at the end of April when the manufacturer has promised a new batch that do not use the faulty chip. Whilst they may not currently display correctly, they do record lots of data. I would like to share some of the facts with you.

Average amount of traffic each week is 39,000 - around 5/6000 per day

48 % of all vehicles are travelling over 30 mph.

63 % of the vehicle coming in from the A15 (Sleaford) end are exceeding 30 mph and 17% are doing over 40 mph. 1 in 5 of all vehicles, 20%, are doing over 35 mph

72 Vehicles have gone past the devices at over 70 mph.

Councillor Mike Pears has worked tirelessly on this and still does . These are his figures. We are very close to setting up our own Speed Watch Group which will help enormously, as it has in other villages. Again Mike is arranging and organising this. So thank you Mike for your time and effort.

We have new aluminium Notice boards set up around the Village now as the old ones were falling to bits. These are next to the front door of the VH and down by the Church. Hopefully these won't rot and will last for many years.

We have maintained, repaired and kept in working order all the play equipment on the Sports field and we will be adding a substantial amount to the Children's play areas later this year. Councillor Michael Cassidy is responsible for these areas and works very hard to keep them up to scratch. Councillor Mrs Cassidy is his willing helper in these endeavours. Thank you both, it's hard work and seldom noticed, but it is appreciated.

We have had to replace the flat roof on the old school as well as repair the interior after water had leaked through the then faulty roof. We have also had to carry out several repairs on the toilets due to leaky cisterns and some remedial electrical work after it was highlighted by a safety inspection.

We have had the ivy removed from the trees at the bottom of the sports pitch on advice that it was smothering and killing the trees there.

There is now electricity on the Village Green, put to good use by the Willows Tea Rooms for the Carole Service in December. I would like to thank the Willows for that event, it went very well and was enjoyed by all. It was a bit dark though and we are working on putting in some lighting in the area in the near future.

We are also responsible for cutting the grass on the Village Green, the Playing field, and some of the grass verges.

Pavilion

There has been an aspiration to build a new Sports Pavilion in the Village for over 20 years and we are closer to realising this wish now than we ever have been. We had a public consultation, every house in the Village got a Flyer and the chance to vote either using the flyer or online. I'd like to thank Councillor Carole Batten who pretty much delivered every single flyer to every single house in the village. So thank you Carole.

The questions were, do you want a pavilion to be built? 73 % were in favour.

What type of building do you want - 69 % wanted a brick building.

The overall response level was 19%.

We submitted plans to NKDC, which were approved, and these are on the website. After what has happened with costs and materials we have had to have a rethink and we had to make it cheaper while still meeting all the user requirements. A new plan has been sent in to planning as a Variation Order and we await the decision.

Costs

We have £20,000, raised by various activities and donations over the last 10 years. We also have a promise of £70,000 from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous. So we have £90,000 to start with. We intend to borrow up to £100,000 from the Public Works Loan Board. This should be a 7 year loan if approved.

Precept.

The Precept this year has increased by 5.5 % per year for a Band D Tax payer. I think this works out at about £8 per household and please note that this is a smaller increase than for the year 21-22. This is not just the Pavilion that has increased this, it is an annual rise considering inflation for all the things that the Parish Council has to pay for but it does include the servicing costs of the Pavilion loan. The Pavilion loan constitutes around £3.20 of that £8 per annum. So for less than the price of one pint of beer a year, or one cup of coffee a year we can get the Pavilion built.

Over the last 2 years we have seen the Village Hall and Social Club Car Parks resurfaced, the Social Club roof replaced, and a great many smaller jobs completed including re-fencing the tennis Courts and putting up new lights on the walkways near the sports field to name but a few.

We have a brand new, rather well-designed, Parish Council Website, this is constantly updated with village news, advertisements, council business and just about any information that might be of use to the people of the Parish. Again, this is down to Cllr Mike Pears who has brought this through from scratch and is the person responsible for keeping it up to date. He does this very well and should be congratulated for a very useful and appealing website.

We also now have a Newsletter produced by Mike and this is emailed out to all those registered. If you wish to register the details are on the website.

Sadly, Mr Rod Morris the Chair of the Village Hall Committee decided to retire from the post in August 2021. Rod has been the VH Chairman for over 20 years has put in so much time and effort into the running and maintenance of the Hall I would be here all night going over them. Safe to say the village owes Rod and Helen a huge dept of gratitude.

Finally, we have 3 main Volunteer Committees in the Village – the Parish Council, the Village Hall Committee and the Social Club Committee. They all have the same aim which is the good and benefit of the Parishioners of Cranwell Brauncewell and Byard's Leap. I am happy to say that, working together, we are achieving this aim.

Ken Wilson and the Village Hall Committee are unsung heroes, working away in the background just making things happen and doing all the administration and keeping the Village Hall maintained and up to scratch. Thank you Ken and please thank your team.

If you have any questions on this report please keep them to item 6 on the agenda where you will have the opportunity to ask the questions.

3. Financial Report of Parish Council for 2021/22 from the Responsible Finance Officer.

As the Parish Clerk/RFO was absent Cllr Pears read out her pre-prepared report.

Income

The Parish Council started the financial year 2021/22 with a carried forward figure of £84,313.50p and have received £49,136 from NKDC for this financial year's precept.

Rents received from hiring out the Old School building totals £6,330 £3,000 of this is for hiring the Old School building in the previous financial year from September 2020 to March 2021. Income for this financial year will continue to be received during the next financial year. £105 of this total is from the Rainbows club.

Other miscellaneous incomes total: £788.86 which is made up from the Village Hall contributions, Bowls club, western power wayleave and £579.39 from NKDC for the litter picking grant, which the Parish Council thank NKDC for their support in this area.

The total income for the financial year 2021/22 is therefore: £56,254.86.

Expenditure

Areas and projects of large expenditure by the parish council consist of the following:

The Parish Council has carried out some major maintenance work on the Social Club roof and the Old School Roof.

The Social club roof has been replaced, the total cost for this was £38,400.

Old School roof has been repaired, the total cost for this was £2,552.98.

Annual Insurance costs for this year were £2,620.49.

The Parish council have bought 2 SIDs for £3,687 to help with the speeding issues through the village.

Installation of Electricity supply for village green cost £3,271.23.

The Parish Council maintain various grass verges areas, hedges and trees throughout the Parish, sports, recreational equipment and playground equipment are also maintained, the parks and open spaces expenditure is therefore one of the biggest ongoing expenditures for the parish which has totalled £18,333.57p for this financial year.

As previously agreed by the parish, £5,000 of the precept was transferred to the pavilion fund bringing this total to £20,363.13.

The total Expenditure for this financial year is therefore, £97,835.71p However £10,804 will hopefully be reclaimed from HMRC through the VAT 126 service.

The carried forward figure for the next financial year will therefore be £47,976.07p.

In October this year the Parish Council will begin to look at the budget for 2023/24, if you have any proposals/ideas for the parish please could you present them to the council before October for their consideration.

4. Receive reports from visiting speakers invited to attend the meeting.

(a) DYSON FARMING

Joanna Knight and Steve Barker explained their operations on the land around our village and elsewhere. They briefly explained about Open Farm Sunday, Aerobic Digesters on their sites, Building work to renovate old farm buildings and Knowledge Provision – their work to help educate other farmers.

They explained that they work alongside Defra on environmental work and biodiversity.

They undertake a lot of work in environmental management – hedges, ponds, footpaths, stone walls and their carbon footprint. They have 240 hectares of wildlife margins under management and explained that 1 hectare equalled one football pitch. They take great care to continue to provide wildbird cover and have 550 hectares of woods. At Nocton Wood they manage areas of dead wood and have lots of bats.

They undertake hedge laying throughout the year and graze sheep as part of their rotation which explains why we are now seeing more sheep around our village.

They have established KFI's to measure environmental success as a way of measuring success and failure in their various farms.

Community Engagement. They are currently working on two big projects and are keen to do more – they are happy to host visiting groups on request.

Permissive footpaths – they are keen to continue with them and will co-operate with the County Council and Parish Council as much as possible.

They explained the delay with their Manor Farm development – further pre-planning work being necessary. They expect building work to start in 2024.

(b) R.A.F.

Three representatives attended – Wing Commander Alison Morton, Cpl Luke Hogg (RAF Police) and regular Liaison Officer (Ian Whitehead). All these are involved in community liaison duties.

It was explained that the RAF are now in the early stages of re-establishing closer links with the community and parish councils. They agreed with the resident's concerns about speeding through our villages and agreed that it was likely that their employees were partly responsible. They agreed that they would strive to educate their staff about this subject.

Wing Commander Morton then explained about their upcoming "College Combined Graduation" parade which was happening in the week commencing 25th April 2022. She explained that this was being staged to give 800 graduates the chance to "have their day" in front of guests and family after missing out over nearly two years due to Covid-19. She explained that during that week there would be 800 extra people on the site although they had been banned from bringing their own vehicles. However on Friday 29th April 2022 there are likely to be 2,000 family members (with vehicles) in the area and lots of helicopters etc. The road through the camp is being closed during the day.

She also explained that "The Sovereigns Event" would take place on May 25th with lots of V.I.P visitors. May 31st is their Family Day. Night flying will continue on April 19th-21st and on April 26th-28th but then there will be no more until September.

A member of the public asked about the planned enlargement of the Cranwell site and when it was likely to happen. It was stated that there was currently no date for this to happen and it was still several years in the future.

(c) LOCAL POLICE

Sgt Mumby-Croft addressed the meeting and opened by stating that he was anticipating receiving criticism about speeding and that he would address this issue later. He explained the changes to the local policing teams in our area and expressed his delight that they were allocating more bodies to us. He explained that currently at most times there were just 2 officers covering Sleaford and its surrounds. A "Rural Action Team" had been formed and 8 officers would soon be

stationed at Sleaford Police Station to concentrate on rural crimes – hare coursing, farm thefts etc.

A "Roads Policing Unit" was also being formed to be based in Grantham and P.C. Mark Solder would be our dedicated officer. They would be responsible for speeding issues.

He explained that we do in fact live in a very safe area. There were only 3 crimes in our Parish during the previous month. The major crimes of concern at the moment are car key theft and computer/phone fraud.

He praised the work of Local Speed Watch Groups and in reply to a question from a member of the public he encouraged us to have one. He explained that after the third time of being reported the police visited the culprit. He promised that they would strive to give us more support with speeding checks following the presentation of our "evidence" from the SIDs.

(d) LIVES.

Their representative gave a detailed explanation of what to do when someone is suspected of having a heart attack. He demonstrated how to use a defibrillator on a prone body.

(e) N.K.D.C DISTRICT COUNCILLOR STEVE CLEGG.

Main points:

He explained how NKDC have coped during Covid-19 and continue to so.

They have built 24 new council houses.

Sleaford Enterprise Park – a 15 year scheme to produce 12 new business premises at a cost of £56 million.

Sleaford – "The Hub" redeveloped.

NKDC were recently inspected by the Govt and received good reviews.

They have 43 councillors, all of whom sit on a planning committee.

The Central Lincs Local Plan is currently being reviewed in a 5 year cycle.

Boundary Review – the parliamentary constituencies are being re-shaped.

Ukraine Appeal – they are expecting 25-35 people to arrive for sanctuary in the next few weeks.

(f) COUNTY COUNCILLOR – RICHARD WRIGHT

Cllr Wright notified the Clerk earlier in the day that he was unable to attend due to concerns about possibly having contracted Covid-19.

5.Projects and Suggestions from the Public.

Potholes are a continuous concern – the Chair explained about “FixMyStreet.com”.

Jubilee Celebrations – a request was made to co-operate with the RAF where possible and make use of their facilities. The RAF assured that they would do so where possible.

Someone suggested that we consider having decorative “gates” on either side of the road at the two ends of the village like Ancaster.

6. Public Discussion and Questioning.

Members of the Public may comment on any Parish issues and direct their comments to the Parish Council or any of the visiting representatives. There were no further questions or comments.

7. Close of the Meeting.

All relevant issues will be taken forward to a future Parish Council Meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15 p.m. and invited everybody to stay for tea and light refreshments.